



For Immediate Release
Contact: Sarah Davis
615.460.8115
sarah.davis@belmont.edu

Belmont University To Present
Les Miserables

NASHVILLE, March 18, 2013 – Belmont University’s Musical Theatre program is excited to stage the country’s first university performance of the Tony Award- winning musical, *Les Miserables*.

“Belmont is fortunate to be the first university to receive the rights to stage a production of *Les Miserables*,” said Marjorie Halbert, Coordinator of the Musical Theatre Degree Program. “Until December, rights were only available for professional theatre companies and an edited version for high schools,” explained Halbert. “Though another show, *A Tale of Two Cities*, had been selected for the spring production and had already been cast, we immediately submitted our request to do *Les Miserables* and we were granted the rights!”

With the success of both the Broadway musical and the movie, *Les Miserables* is the most recognized musical in the world. Forty-three Musical Theatre majors will be used in the ten performances that tell the epic story of Jean Valjean amidst the destruction and passion in 19th century France.

Senior musical theatre major and Russellville, Ala. native Tucker Hammock is tackling the lead role of Valjean. “*Les Miserables* has such a beautiful message of grace, second chances and forgiveness... I have to say the biggest challenge is finding ways to make the characters/ story/songs our own. Most people are familiar with *Les Mis*; they've

either seen the movie, or seen the show and heard the music. Our job is to make it like the audience is watching it for the very first time."

The production will include the beloved musical score including "I Dreamed a Dream," "On My Own," "Bring Him Home," "Do You Hear the People Sing?" and "One Day More."

Senior musical theatre majors Mary-Claire Lutz (Nashville) and Haley Henderson (Springdale, Ark.) will share the role of Fantine. Lutz said, "[Fantine] is in such a vulnerable place in every situation she is put in, and she perseveres for her daughter. She has been rejected, abused, abandoned and betrayed, but the love she has for her daughter fuels her to stay alive, no matter the cost to herself... Because of the combination of the message of *Les Miserables* and my peers/professors/production team, I can confidently say that I know what 'To love another person is to see the face of God' truly means."

Henderson added, "I have had so much fun at Belmont. I have grown so much throughout my experience here, and now to end my time at Belmont by singing one of the most iconic songs on Broadway, 'I Dreamed a Dream,' is literally a dream come true."

This grand production celebrates both the 15th year of the Musical Theatre degree program and the final production of Halbert's career with the School of Music. Halbert started the Musical Theatre program in 1998 and is retiring at the end of this semester. "This is the most ambitious undertaking of my career at Belmont and I'm pleased to say that we are ready for this production, said Halbert who is also the Producing Artistic Director of the production. "I am grateful for the opportunity to bring this epic story to the Belmont campus and to be the first university to do *Les Miserables*."

The performances will be March 15- 17 and 21-24 in the Troutt Theater. Due to overwhelming demand, only a limited number of partial view seats remain available at www.belmont.edu/music or (615) 460-7250.

For more Belmont University news and photographs, visit the Belmont University News website at <http://forum.belmont.edu/umac>

